

Message Text

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16

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00

SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 IO-11 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 AID-05 SAM-01 SAB-01

EB-07 OC-05 CCO-00 OPR-02 A-01 SCCT-01 SY-05 ST-01

CU-02 OMB-01 /106 W

----- 030602

O R 090915Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8031

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 0238

DELIVER TO NEA/ARN/DRAPEL AT OPENING OF BUSINESS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, LE

SUBJECT: 0900 LEBANON REPORT

1. LAST NIGHT WAS PROBABLY THE HEAVIEST FIRING THAT BEIRUT HAS BEEN SUBJECTED TO SINCE APRIL. EARLY IN THE EVENING IT WAS MOSTLY CONCENTRATED IN AND OUT OF TEL ZAATAR CAMP. CAMP WAS RECEIVING HEAVY ROCKET/MORTAR FIRE AND THERE WERE WEAPONS FIRING INTO IT FROM THE HILLS BEHIND THE CAMP AND NORTHEAST OF THE EMBASSY RESIDENCE. THE GUN FLASHES WERE COMING FROM POINTS HIGHER ON THE HILL THAN THE EMBASSY RESIDENCE. THIS IS TROUBLESOME IN THAT IT IS THE FIRST TIME WE HAVE SEEN FIRING FROM THAT AREA. ILLUMINATING ROUNDS WERE ALSO USED FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE BEIRUT SHOOT UPS. CREWS OBVIOUSLY WERE NOT WELL VERSED IN THEIR USE, IN THAT THEY WERE FIRED TOO HIGH AND I DOUBT THAT THEY DID MUCH GOOD. BEFORE MIDNIGHT LOCUS OF FIRING SHIFTED FROM TEL ZAATAR TO CHIYAH, AIN RUMMANEH AREA WHERE THERE WERE SOME EXTREMELY HEAVY EXPLOSIONS, THE LIKES
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OF WHICH I HAVE NOT HEARD BEFORE. FIRING WAS VISIBLE

AND AUDIBLE IN THE EASTERN PART OF THE CITY AND HADET WAS NOISY, EXCHANGING FIRE WITH BOURJ AL BARAJINAH CAMP IN AIRPORT AREA. WE HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE HEAVY REINFORCEMENTS WERE BROUGHT IN BY KATAEB AND QUALAYLAT HAS CALLED UP ALL REPEAT ALL OF HIS RESOURCES. I CANNOT HELP BUT BELIEVE WE ARE IN FOR A MAJOR SHOWDOWN. STRANGELY ENOUGH THE HOTEL AREA IS NOT REPEAT NOT INVOLVED AT THIS TIME.

2. KARAME/CHAMOUN CONFLICT HAS BURST TO THE FORE, WITH KARAME ACCUSING CHAMOUN OF CURRENT ESCALATION AND CHAMOUN CALLING UPON GOVT TO ACT OR RESIGN.

3. TRAVEL TO AIRPORT IS GETTING A BIT COMPLICATED AND YESTERDAY WE SENT PERSONNEL AND CLASSIFIED POUCHES TO AIRPORT IN LEBANESE ARMY APC THAT HAS BEEN ASSIGNED TO GUARDING THE EMBASSY.

4. TWO EMBASSY LOCAL EMPLOYEES STILL HELD BY TASHNAK RIGHTIST ARMENIANS. 5:30 A. M. THIS MORNING, HOWEVER, ANOTHER ARMENIAN EMPLOYEE WAS ASKED TO PROCEED TASHNAK HEADQUARTERS TO RECEIVE THE TWO KIDNAPPED MEN AT APPROXIMATELY 11:00 A.M. LOCAL. HE HAS TELEPHONED FROM THAT HEADQUARTERS THAT ALL APPEARS PROCEEDING SMOOTHLY.

5. DEPARTMENT'S SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENT AGAINST INTERVENTION

LEBANON CARRIED BY L'ORIENT LE JOUR UPPER RIGHT HAND CORNER FRONT PAGE.

6. I HAD MEETING YESTERDAY SCHEDULED 11:00 A.M. WITH PRESIDENT. THIS WAS ABOUT THE WORST MOMENT WE HAD BEFORE THINGS GOT SORTED OUT. I THEREFORE CANCELLED MY MEETING AND HAVE SOUGHT ANOTHER ONE, WHICH HAS NOT REPEAT NOT YET BEEN GRANTED.

7. JUMBLATT RETURNED FROM SAUDI ARABIA. EDDE LEFT FOR PARIS.

8. FOR THOSE FOLLOWING IN DETAIL BEIRUT FIGHTING,
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A SMALL TRIANGLE DIRECTLY SOUTH OF SINN EL-FIL AND DUE WEST OF DEKWANNEH APPEARS TO BE CRITICAL TERRAIN. IT HAS EXCHANGED HANDS AT LEAST FOUR TIMES SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE TEL ZAATAR INCIDENT. TEL ZAATAR IN THE CHRISTIAN EYES IS NOT ONLY A SYMBOL OF PALESTINIAN ENCROACHMENT IN THE BEIRUT AREAS, BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY MUST BE IN CHRISTIAN HANDS IF THE CHRISTIANS ARE TO MAINTAIN THE AIN RUMANNEH, FURN EL-CHEBBECK, ASHRAFIYEH, SINN EL-FIL

CORDON.

9. RADIO JERUSALEM THIS MORNING WENT BESERK RE ATTACK AGAINST BEIRUT AIRPORT. WHAT REALLY HAPPENED WAS THAT ONE STRAY MORTAR ROUND HIT THE MEA CATERING AREA. THIS BODES ILL FOR GOOD MEALS ON MEA BUT NOT REPEAT NOT FOR CONTINUED OPERATION OF THE AIRPORT.

1. ZAHLE, TRIPOLI REPORTED QUIET. AUB REPORTS CLASSES AS USUAL, REGISTRATION ABOUT 2200, AND NO REPEAT NO DIFFICULTIES AS A RESULT OF RECENT UPSURGE FIGHTING.

11. MOST IMPORTANT NEWS AS FAR AS THIS MISSION CONCERNED IS THAT EMBASSY'S MAZOUT TRUCK WAS HIGHJACKED YESTERDAY AND HAS NOT BEEN HEARD OF SINCE. WE ARE PROMISED ANOTHER ONE TODAY.
GODLEY

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NNN

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